

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 04176 261644Z
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 4176

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR NATO BE
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON MAY NAC MEETING

REF: BRUSSELS 4025

SUMMARY: BELGIANS INFORM US OF THEIR SUBSTANTIVE REPLY TO USG
POINTS FOR DISCUSSION MADE STATE 86300. BELGIAN EMBASSY IN
WASHINGTON HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO MAKE POINTS BELOW TO DEPARTMENT.
END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER REPEATING BELGIAN GOVERNMENT'S PLEASURE IN BEING
CONSULTED IN ADVANCE BY USG AND HOPE THAT USG UNDERSTANDS
SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH BELGIAN GOVERNMENT VIEWS PROCEDURAL
QUESTION (BRUSSELS 3934), FOREIGN MINISTRY'S CHIEF OF NATO
AFFAIRS, ERIK BAL, GAVE US THE FOLLOWING RUNDOWN OF BELGIUM'S
SUBSTANTIVE REPLY:

(A) THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT IS VERY PLEASED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER
WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE MAY NAC MEETING. A MEETING AT THE SUMMIT
PROVIDES ANOTHER TANGIBLE OCCASION TO DEMONSTRATE THE SOLIDARITY
AND COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE. THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESIDENT
ILLUSTRATES THE U.S. INTEREST IN EUROPE. THE INTEREST OF THE
USG IN EUROPE IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE EAST-WEST EQUILIBRIUM,
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WHICH, IF MAINTAINED, CAN LEAD TO THE POSSIBILITY OF DETENTE.

(B) THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT IS IN FAVOR OF THE SIX MAJOR THEMES
LISTED IN THE FIRST PART OF THE PRESENTATION MADE IN WASHINGTON
(STATE 86300).

(C) THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT SUGGESTS THAT IT MIGHT BE PRUDENT

FOR THE PRESIDENT TO AVOID GETTING TOO SPECIFIC AT THE SUMMIT ON PROPOSALS FOR NEW PANELS AND BODIES. THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE GOALS OF SUCH NEW BODIES IMPORTANT, BUT BELIEVES THAT EXISTING NATO BODIES (E.G., CNAD, SPC) SHOULD BE EXAMINED FIRST TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE NOT ADAPTABLE TO THE NEW GOALS. ANY U.S. SUMMIT PROPOSAL WHICH IS SPECIFIC IN SUGGESTING NEW MECHANISMS MIGHT ACTUALLY COMPLICATE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DESIRED GOALS.

(D) ON THE U.S. SUGGESTION ON HOW TO HANDLE TRANS-ATLANTIC COOPERATION IN ARMAMENTS WITH THE EPG, THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT NOTES THAT THE EPG ITSELF IS WORKING ON PROPOSALS WHICH WILL BE DISCUSSED IN THE FALL. UNTIL THE EPG HAS ITSELF EXAMINED THE ISSUE, THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT SUGGESTS THERE BE NO NEW SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW CONSULTATIVE MECHANISMS. RENNER

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